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# PROTECTION OF THE ATMOSPHERE

## Compilation of views of Governments on the atmosphere

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. This document is a compilation of views on the atmosphere submitted by the Governments of Canada, Netherlands and Tunisia after the third session of the Preparatory Committee. At the request of the Preparatory Committee it has been prepared as part of the input into the discussions on the Agenda 21 options for atmosphere at the fourth session. (See also A/CONF.151/PC/42/Add.1 and A/CONF.151/PC/WG.I/L.25/Rev.2.)

## II. SUBMISSION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

2. Protection of the atmosphere: suggested programme areas are as follows:

Protection of the atmosphere through:

A. Promoting environmentally sound sustainable energy management and development:

1. Promoting the energy transition;

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* See A/CONF.151/PC/96.

2. Increasing energy efficiency;

3. Promoting renewable energy sources;

B. Promoting environmentally sound and sustainable transport systems;

C. Promoting sustainable consumption patterns and lifestyles;

D. Promoting environmentally sound and sustainable industrial management and development;

E. Promoting sustainable land-use management and development;

F. Promoting increased awareness and improving the knowledge-base/understanding:

a. Education and awareness;

b. Information;

c. Reducing the uncertainties.

General comments

3. As Canada has stated on a number of occasions, this component of Agenda 21 should have as its overall objective the protection of the atmosphere. This should be properly reflected in the overall introduction to this component of Agenda 21 and/or the basis of action for each programme area. The "chapeau" to the programme areas - "Protection of the atmosphere through:" - is one means of providing the required emphasis as to what the following programme areas and associated activities are designed to accomplish. It identifies the following programme areas as ones which, when implemented, will contribute to the protection of the atmosphere. It thereby provides the link between the programme areas and General Assembly resolution 44/228.

4. The grouping of the three energy programme areas under one heading recognizes the overall goal of the associated activities and provides a linkage between them. It further provides an opportunity, in the form of an introductory paragraph, to identify the link between the atmosphere issues, energy and development objectives in terms of both causes and solutions.

5. There is some advantage to be gained by grouping the activities on education, awareness, and information into one programme area. The requirement is not only for increased education and awareness related to the concept of promoting the energy transition or promoting sustainable consumption patterns and lifestyles. The requirement is for education and increased awareness of the need to respect the atmosphere/environment and to ensure that the necessary information is available for making fully informed decisions. Compiling the proposed education, awareness and information

activities under a single programme area would better reflect the need for a broad yet integrated basis for the decision-making process.

6. The suggested change in the title of the programme for the "Industrial management and development" area reflects the need to recognize that industrial management and development should not only be carried out in a manner that does not adversely impact on the atmosphere but also in such a manner that can take advantage of opportunities which could improve the quality of the atmosphere.

7. The broadening of the protection of the atmosphere component of Agenda 21 to consider not only climate change but transboundary air pollution and stratospheric ozone depletion necessitates that the introduction be revised. This could be accomplished by introducing a new paragraph before the current paragraph 1 of A/CONF.151/PC/WG.I/L.25/Rev.2, which provides an introduction to the full range of the atmospheric issues covered by the programme areas. This should be followed by paragraphs, as appropriate, similar to paragraph 1, for transboundary air pollution and for stratospheric ozone depletion.

8. The following text is suggested:

> The protection of the atmosphere component of Agenda 21 includes activities to protect the atmosphere by combating climate change, depletion of the ozone layer and transboundary air pollution, as well as identifying the means of implementing those activities. This component of Agenda 21 is flexible and evolving reflecting the changes in the scientific understanding of the issues, its impacts, and response strategies and the state of the international efforts in developing the necessary political responses.
>
> Each of these issues, to one degree or another, is being examined in other fora. In terms of the climate change issue this includes the negotiations on climate change within the International Negotiating Committee which is addressing many of the issues contained in the following text. In so far as the following proposals refer to climate related activities under negotiations by the INC, they should not pre-empt, duplicate or be interpreted as prejudging those negotiations concerning questions that may arise, and be discussed there, such as general objectives and commitments, standards, conditionality, institutional arrangements and mechanisms for funding incremental costs.
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> Efforts to study and control the depletion of the ozone layer have been under way for many years. A mature, effective, self-supporting institutional framework has been developed to deal with ozone layer depletion. It includes specific legal agreements (The Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer), financial arrangements (The Convention and Protocol "Trust Funds" as well as the "Interim Multilateral Fund"), and an administrative infrastructure (provided through UNEP). This framework provides for coordination of scientific research and atmospheric monitoring, measures to control the production

and consumption of ozone depleting substances, incentives and penalties to encourage participation, and special consideration of and support to developing countries. Experience from the global efforts to combat ozone layer depletion provides many useful lessons and models that could be applied to some degree to other atmospheric and environmental issues. In so far as the following proposals refer to activities under consideration by the Parties to the Montreal Protocol, they should not pre-empt, duplicate or be interpreted as prejudging the results of the existing process or activities.

Transboundary air pollution contributes to many human health and environmental problems throughout the world (e.g., acid rain, tropospheric ozone, and the accumulation of persistent organochlorine compounds). Combating transboundary air pollution is primarily a regional problem. There are, however, advantages to coordinating and cooperating at the global level particularly in terms of monitoring and assessment, sharing of information and experience on control strategies, increasing public awareness of the problem and solutions, research, and development and demonstration of related technologies.

9. The following comments and suggestions are made for activities under the programme areas (all paragraph references are to A/CONF.151/PC/WG.I/L.25/Rev.2):

A. Promoting environmentally sound energy management and development:

- Introductory paragraph that relates the need for action in the energy sector to the goals of protection of the atmosphere as a means of achieving sustainable development.

1. Promoting the energy transition:

(a) Paragraph 4: The current wording suggests that all current energy production and consumption is "polluting and wasteful", which is not true. Insert a qualifying phrase such as "in those instances where present production and consumption ...".

(b) Paragraph 4: new developments should also consider the full costs, applicability and appropriateness of technologies for a particular situation in addition to whether they are the most efficient and least polluting.

(c) Paragraph 5: This is not an objective but appears to be more of an activity. Support for this type of target/schedule may be difficult due to the problems with defining environmentally sound energy systems, especially when the constraints identified in paragraph 7 are taken into consideration. In particular, these targets/schedules would need to recognize the rights of each country to choose its own path to the transition.

(d) Paragraph 9 (f): consumers should also be included.

(e) Need for an activity which recognizes the need for management and development of fossil fuel based energy systems which are more environmentally sound (see objective, paragraph 4). This would include the need for the necessary research, development and information dissemination programmes.

(f) Need for an activity which addresses the issues associated with the transition from the existing systems to the "new" systems and how this transition can build on the existing systems (e.g., infrastructure).

(g) Need for an activity on the production of energy from wastes such as collecting energy from waste (e.g., methane from landfill sites) and use of wastes to create energy.

2. Increasing energy efficiency:

(a) Paragraph 13: the use of market forces to increase output per unit of energy input and reduce the environmental impacts per unit activity should be referenced here.

(b) Paragraph 15 (b): amend the last line to read - "... through policy measures which are cost effective.".

(c) Several of the activities proposed under this heading are the subject of negotiations with the process of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Framework Convention on Climate Change, and care will need to be taken to ensure that they do not duplicate, pre-empt or prejudge the negotiations within that process.

3. Promoting renewable energy sources:

(a) Paragraph 19: should add a qualifier - "where cost effective" after the word "policies" in the second line or a qualifier such as "countries should/could review or consider developing policies ...".

(b) Paragraph 20 (b): add a reference to utilizing the private sector, for example, through joint ventures.

(c) Activities should be directed at local application and adaptation of viable (defined locally) renewable energy resources. More specifically it should be recognized that the issue of energy from renewable sources (e.g., biomass) is not just a technical issue, but one involving managing local renewable resources in a sustainable manner.

(d) Need to recognize the role of better local application and adaptation of viable existing and new renewable energy technologies with improved local management of renewable resources. Large increases in funding for R&D of ESES and new technologies are not the only nor most viable solution to energy-atmosphere problems. The key technical issue is the viable adaptation of existing and new technologies to local conditions.

B. Promoting environmentally sound and sustainable transport systems:

1. Paragraph 24: the wording in this paragraph should be changed to provide a balance between environmentally sound practices and economic development.

2. Need to recognize the role of alternative fuels (separate activity).

3. Need to include activities which, recognizing the contribution of air and marine transport to atmospheric problems, put forward potential solutions. This could include actions regarding fuel efficiency, routing, and exploring alternative forms of air (e.g., air ship) and marine (sail and sail/power combinations) transport.

4. Need to include recognition that addressing this programme also requires action related to integrating the need for environmentally sound and sustainable transport systems into urban planning and management.

5. Need to encourage governments and relevant United Nations and other international organizations to explore with municipalities and other urban organizations the potential for mass transit and land-use planning to contribute to reducing the impact of transport systems on the atmosphere.

6. Countries and United Nations and other relevant international organizations should encourage the development of integrated mass transit systems (land, air and marine) and encourage the exchange of information on the relative costs and benefits of various options and combinations.

C. Promoting sustainable consumption patterns and lifestyles:

1. Sustainable consumptions patterns and lifestyles in terms of protection of the atmosphere are more than just energy.

2. Overall objective should be to integrate atmospheric/environmental objectives into the decision-making process at all levels.

3. Paragraph 28: Suggesting that differences in energy use as measured on a per capita basis are due to overuse of energy by the affluent is an oversimplification. The premise confuses energy efficiency and energy intensity in many cases. Some countries are high users of energy because of climate, geography and because of the energy intensity of their industrial base, yet these countries are relatively energy efficient. This paragraph should be reworded to emphasize ending wasteful energy consumption patterns through more sustainable lifestyles.

4. Paragraph 32 (a): All countries should/could promote sustainable lifestyles ...

5. Paragraph 32 (f): This paragraph should be deleted and the issue of greenhouse gas emission levels should be left for negotiations within the process of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee.

6. Need to recognize that current consumption patterns and lifestyles in both developed and developing countries can contribute to degradation of the quality of the local, regional and global atmosphere and are in many cases non-sustainable. The problem, although to a large extent related to energy consumption, is also related to the generation and management of wastes in various forms.

7. Activities should lead to identification of potential for and implementation, as appropriate, of energy conservation programmes, as well as sustainable/environmentally sound recycling, reusing and reducing programmes for wastes of all kinds, especially those emitted into the atmosphere.

8. Need to identify the factors which contribute to current consumption patterns (e.g., climate, geography, resource base, etc.).

9. Need to consider the impacts of climate change in terms of defining sustainable consumption patterns and lifestyles.

10. Indicators for "sufficient energy service requirements" would be difficult to develop and maintain even at the national level and would be of limited use because of the variety of factors that would need to be integrated and their dynamic characteristics.

11. Global ceiling on per capita energy consumption is a concept currently under negotiation with the process of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee and, therefore, should not be included in Agenda 21 at this time.

D. Promoting environmentally sound and sustainable industrial management and development:

1. Industry should be interpreted to include the activities of not only the "private" sector (including service and commercial industries) but also of the "public" sector with control strategies and management tools directed to address both sectors.

2. Control strategies should be developed in a coordinated and integrated manner that considers potential impacts on all atmospheric and environmental issues and not just on an issue by issue basis (e.g., many ozone substitutes are greenhouse gases or can contribute to atmospheric pollution).

3. Activities should be directed at:

(a) Need to develop methodologies which could be used to calculate the full costs and benefits of control options and to promote studies which document these costs and benefits at the national and/or regional levels;

(b) Developing emission inventory methodologies;

(c) Reducing emissions to the atmosphere from industrial processes;

(d) Reducing waste/increasing efficiency of industrial processes;

(e) Responsible life-cycle management of products and wastes, etc. which includes environmental audits;

(f) Integrating into the decision making-process for the management and development of natural resources industries (e.g., forestry, fisheries, mining) the impacts of the atmospheric issues (e.g., need for adaptation to climate change).

E. Promoting sustainable land-use management and development:

Activities should be directed at:

1. Soil management to reduce contribution of agriculture and forestry to atmospheric problems.

2. Reducing agriculture and forestry contribution to atmospheric pollution including enhanced greenhouse gas emissions.

3. Identifying type and amount of emissions from biomass burning, where emissions from biomass burning are coming from and where they are going.

4. Promoting afforestation, reforestation, and agricultural programmes which recognize their potential for addressing the climate change issue (see IPCC First Assessment Report - Impacts and Response Strategies).

5. Recognizing the need for land-use management and development to consider the potential impacts of climate change (i.e., need for adaptation) including the need for specific actions related to the impact of climate change on agriculture productivity, forestry, drought and desertification, biological diversity, freshwater resources, etc. (see Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, First assessment report - Impacts).

6. The need for action to increase nutritional/food security in light of the impacts (positive and negative) of climate change and transboundary air pollution on agricultural productivity.

F. Promoting increased awareness and improving the knowledge-base:

Paragraph 36: delete all that follows after the phrase "... human activities".

1. Education and awareness:

(a) Education and awareness activities currently listed under the proposed programme areas of the atmospheric component of Agenda 21 should be brought under this programme area presenting an integrated approach to education and awareness (this would include information dissemination programmes regarding relevant technologies).

(b) Education and awareness activities should: inform stakeholders of the issues, the potential impacts, and response options and the consequence of their implementation.

(c) Need for increased awareness of the impacts of reduced atmospheric quality and global climate change on social (including human health) and economic welfare (e.g., nutritional/food security, land-use potential, natural resource industries such as fisheries and forestry, etc.).

(d) Improving the communication of the results of research and development programmes examining the linkages between the atmospheric issues through directed international, regional and national education and information exchange programmes.

2. Information:

(a) Need for establishment, enhancement, and maintenance of multiple-use national, regional and global (systematic) observing and associated assessment capabilities that can assess the state of the atmosphere/climate, its variations and trends as well as the responses of ecological and human systems (includes coincident data and information on associated physical, social and economic parameters).

(b) Need for the means of exchanging information on the science and research and development related to the atmospheric issues and potential solutions.

3. Reducing the uncertainties:

(a) Need for strengthening cooperation on international and regional research and development programmes directed at reducing the uncertainties associated with the atmospheric issues and the regional and national environmental, social (including human health), and economic consequences of these issues. This would include the need to promote research into:

(1) The linkages among the atmospheric issues (transboundary air pollution, ozone depletion and climate change);

(2) The role of aquatic (especially oceans), forested, wetlands, and arctic ecosystems in the climate system and the impacts of atmospheric issues thereon;

(3) The impacts of the atmospheric issues on human social (including human health) and economic welfare.

(b) Increase efforts at the international, regional and national levels directed at understanding the broader issues of climate, climate variability and climate change arising from causes other than enhanced atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases, as well as their impacts on natural and human systems.

(c) Need to promote interdisciplinary research into the impacts of the atmospheric issues on other environmental and development issues involving physical, biological and social researchers along with those from the atmospheric sciences.

## III. SUBMISSION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE NETHERLANDS

10. There are no detailed comments other than those already made in the European Community's intervention(s) (e.g. concerning use of the word "could" rather than "should"). General: the matter of how reference will be made to EC/intergovernmental organization remains to be clarified. References to this must then be made in a consistent manner.

## IV. SUBMISSION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF TUNISIA

A. Protection of the atmosphere:

(i) The introduction of this document must mention the fact that the industrialized countries and the major consumers of fossil energy bear a greater share of responsibility for damage to the atmosphere. This is something which cannot be overemphasized.

(ii) The components of Agenda 21 relating to environmental protection are relevant.

The programme area involving the promotion of large-scale reforestation as a means of increasing the $CO_2$ absorptive capacity of the Earth/atmosphere interface must be retained. This Agenda 21 component needs to be thoroughly developed.

(iii) A new programme area should be added involving the development of atmospheric monitoring systems appropriate to the follow-up and continuous monitoring of air quality and the establishment of an early warning mechanism for hazardous transboundary air pollution.

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